

in the last 2½ years. The facts say otherwise. We cut congressional committee staffs by one-third, passed term limits for the Speaker of the House and committee chairmen, opened congressional hearings to the public, forced Congress to get a three-fifths vote before hiking taxes, and made it live by the laws it passes. And that was all done on just the first day of the 104th Congress.

Shortly thereafter, we cut congressional spending by 10 percent, banned lobbyists from giving gifts to Members of Congress, and rescinded more than \$9 billion in 1995 spending agreed to under the old majority.

Critics say that Government spending has not changed since 1995. The fact is that in the 7 years before the GOP Congress, Government spending grew by an average of 5.3 percent per year. In the last 2 years, however, spending has grown by an average of only 3.1 percent. In the 20 years before a GOP majority, Congress spent an average of \$1.21 for every dollar it took in. Today that number is \$1.01.

The critics have been especially rough on our balanced budget agreement, saying that it does too little to entitlement programs and assumes a future of tall clover, balancing the budget with rosy economic forecasts. The fact is that Government spending slows the rate of growth of entitlement spending by over \$400 billion over the next 10 years. Rather than relying on pie-in-the-sky economics, the agreement actually assumes that the economy, which has been growing at an average of 2.7 percent in the last 5 years, will actually slow down and grow by only 2.1 percent over the next 5 years.

The critics say that we have gotten off track in our plan to balance the budget. Once again, they were wrong. In our 7-year balanced budget plan, we estimated that we would collect about \$1.43 trillion in revenue in 1996 and \$1.45 trillion in 1997. Similarly, we projected spending \$1.59 trillion in 1996 and \$1.62 trillion in 1997. Because of the strong economy, however, we have actually taken in \$149 billion more than we expected. And the sweeter news is that in the last 2 years we have actually spent \$48 billion less than our projections.

To put it another way, for 2 years Congress has had \$149 billion more to spend than it planned. But unlike previous Congresses, we held the line on spending and came in \$48 billion under our goals. Does anyone seriously believe that if a Democratic Congress found itself with nearly \$150 billion in unexpected revenue it would spend \$48 billion less than its budget targets?

Teddy Roosevelt once said, "It is not the critic who counts." Similarly, the bumblebee really does not care what the experts or critics say about how he is flying. He just flies and goes about his business. He simply does not know any better.

Since we buzzed into Washington to begin our work in 1995, the stock market has doubled, interest rates have

dropped by 25 percent, and 6.4 million new jobs have been created. Above all, this year the deficit stands at \$23 billion, the lowest it has been in more than 20 years.

If the critics can continue to ignore the facts, we will just have to ignore the critics. To paraphrase the old Arab proverb, "Dogs may bark in the night, but the bumblebee brigade flies on."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAFALCE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. LAFALCE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. TOWNS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. TOWNS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. FAZIO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. FAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. SANDERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon [Ms. FURSE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. FURSE addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. HOYER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

#### TRIBUTE TO JOHN N. STURDIVANT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. RUSH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, tonight, I rise to give tribute to the late John N. Sturdivant,

President of the American Federation of Government Employees. John died last week, after a heroic battle with leukemia.

Family, friends, and co-workers said farewell to John Sturdivant this week at a memorial service. He will be deeply missed.

John Sturdivant dedicated his life to working people, especially government workers. As leader of AFGE—178,000 members representing one-third of our federal workforce—John fought tirelessly to transform the union into a dynamic advocate for the working and middle class Americans who make up the D.C. and federal workforce.

John led a vigorous national campaign for pay raises, better benefits, and working conditions. He worked hard with legislators at all levels, to encourage "locality pay." This promotes a salary system that makes sure that federal workers are paid at a comparable level with private sector workers.

John was at the forefront of a struggle that my constituents who are public service and federal workers face daily: the fight against privatization. He also fought for the use of "official time," and was a champion of the struggle to protect federal workers' retirement benefits.

We will remember John Sturdivant for many contributions. He championed the right of federal workers to have a voice in politics. Working in a bipartisan manner, John Sturdivant worked to secure reforms to the Hatch Act. These changes now allow federal workers to contribute money, attend fundraisers and do volunteer election work such as staffing phone banks.

I have worked closely during my years in public service with AFGE. It will be hard for the union to replace John. But I know that his example, courage, and leadership have made the union and the entire labor movement stronger.

I offer my deepest sympathy to John Sturdivant's companion Peggy Potter, his daughter, Michelle, his mother, Mrs. Ethiel Jessie, and his brothers.

I thank you for this chance to remember an outstanding American, an outstanding African-American labor leader, and an outstanding human being truly committed to social justice for all.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. McNULTY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. McNULTY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

#### RECOGNIZING 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF FLEMINGTON JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PAPPAS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, in just a few weeks, congregants of the Flemington Jewish Community Center in Flemington, New Jersey, and many of their friends will gather to celebrate several significant milestones in their faith and in their community. On November 23, the Flemington Jewish

Community Center will celebrate its 50th anniversary at a gala dinner dance at the Martinsville Inn in Martinsville, New Jersey.

Over the past 50 years, the community center has inspired, educated, counseled, and guided countless numbers of the Jewish faithful. While the dinner will recognize the 50 years that center has been located at its present location in Flemington, it is important to note that the group itself was in existence for many years before gathering throughout the community. This year also marks a significant time for the entire Jewish community, as it marks the 50th anniversary of the State of Israel.

The celebration will also recognize another notable occurrence. It was over 10 years ago that Rabbi Evan Jaffe, a native of Denver, was chosen as the spiritual leader of the Flemington Jewish Community Center. During the decade that he has spent in New Jersey, the rabbi has become an instrumental and active leader in the Jewish community throughout the State.

Aside from the spiritual leadership he has demonstrated throughout his years at the synagogue, he has distinguished himself by service to the community by serving the elder members of the faith at the Edison State Nursing Home and the Greenbrook Regional Center. Additionally, he serves as the Jewish chaplain to Jewish inmates in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties. He is also the vice president of the Jewish Family Service of Somerset, Hunterdon, and Warren Counties and serves as chaplain at both the Hunterdon Medical Center and the Hagedorn Geriatric Center.

Beyond the celebration of High Holy Days and weekly services, the center has truly become a center for the faithful of the community to gather for cultural, social, and educational purposes. The tremendous amount of work, planning, and dedication of those who persevered to establish the center so many years ago lives on today. What began with a few families, business people, and farmers has evolved into a comprehensive center which continues to grow each year. Today, this facility serves over 230 families throughout Hunterdon County and the surrounding areas, and each year that number continues to grow.

Throughout the years, the Community Center and Rabbi Jaffe in particular have proved to be a place of comfort for those in times of sorrow and have been an instrumental part of the joy and happiness of many families and individuals. Whether it was the newfound joy of a child or the sorrow experienced while grieving the death of a loved one, the spirit, support, and faith he provides and they provide to congregants is invaluable.

The center is a place where both young and old can learn about the history of the Jewish faith, its traditions and customs. It is a place of learning and enrichment and serves as a focal

point for young people to gather the knowledge and maintain the traditions that have been handed down to them.

Not too long ago, I was fortunate enough to have been invited to a special service at the Flemington Jewish Center. It was a moving celebration of the bar and bat mitzvahs of a number of severely disabled community residents. Many of the young people being honored were unable to speak, see, or to stand. Yet, the joy and meaning of the event was clearly understood by each and every one of them, their families, and all who participated that day.

It was the commitment of Rabbi Jaffe who made the effort to visit these individuals weekly, often in institutional settings, to help them to learn the portion of the Torah which they were to share with the congregation. The outpouring of love and pride that day is something I will not soon forget.

Recently, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to travel to Israel. The Jewish federations of the five counties in my district made this possible, including many of the members of the Flemington Jewish Center. While I have always been a staunch supporter of Israel, I came away even clearer about the needs of the region, the tenuous balance the Israeli people are trying to maintain, and the absolute need for a lasting peace.

The United States must remain strong in its resolve to support the efforts of the Israeli people. They have succeeded through determination, resolve, hard work, and know-how to facilitate an independent and flourishing nation and to remain connected to the Jewish people throughout our country and countries around the world.

So, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to joining with the friends, families, and members of the Flemington Jewish Community Center as they celebrate their faith, history, stories, traditions, and values. This upcoming 50th anniversary dinner will allow us the opportunity to fondly recall the past, celebrate all that has been accomplished, and continue to look ahead to the future.

For the last 50 years, the Flemington Jewish Community Center has served the faithful and the community at large very well. If the spirit, dedication, and faith of those who founded and continue to be a part of the center are any indication of what the future holds, this community can only grow stronger. So today, I would like to wish the Flemington Jewish Community Center and Rabbi Jaffe a hearty mazel-tov.

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#### NO MORE COMPLACENCY: RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IS REAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. BRADY]. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. MORAN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, with Thanksgiving around the corner

and this session hopefully coming soon to an end, it is probably useful to remind ourselves that unfortunately we often take the freedoms we have been granted and enjoy in this country for granted. In the United States we do not have to worry about being arrested just for going to church. No one tries to stop us from praying in our own homes. In this country you might get into an argument with your neighbor over the relationship between church and State, but he or she does not kidnap your children, brainwash them and sell them into slavery just to punish you for your faith.

But that is a scenario that is not alien to Christians in the Sudan, where in the course of civil war and a campaign of terror millions of Sudanese Christians have been killed or displaced, and they are not alone. It has been estimated that more Christians have died for their faith in the 20th century than in the previous 19 centuries combined. The Roman emperors at their worst could not have imagined the magnitude of persecution that goes on today. That is not to say that Christians are the only victims of religious persecution in today's world. Far from it. But what I find disturbing is the complacent and even dismissive reaction that many Americans have to the plight of those persecuted because of their Christian faith. It is as if we believe Christianity enjoys a comfortable station over the world, that it is universally embraced by the establishment, but Christianity is a threat to the status quo.

In the Sudan, China, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam and many other countries, the establishment knows that. In those countries, the establishment does not embrace Christianity, it intends to crush it. Whether targeting individual Christians or enforcing sweeping laws banning all forms of Christian expression, these regimes share a common goal and a common crime, the violation of a fundamental, God-given human right.

In Saudi Arabia it is illegal to wear a cross or even to pray privately in homes. Preaching the gospel to Muslims in Iran is punishable by death, and so is the act of conversion. In China, where Protestants and Catholics have been named principal threats to stability, earlier this year 100 church leaders were arrested in just 3 months.

In Cuba, the arrest of a Pentecostal pastor last year led to Castro's government ordering the closing of all of the country's home churches, estimated at as many as 10,000. In Pakistan, Christians can be accused of blasphemy, a capital offense. In Uzbekistan, Christians have been warned that they will forfeit their registration if they evangelize.

In Vietnam, where many restrictions on Christians were lifted earlier this decade, the Communist Party government has slid backward to repressive policies, including arrest, imprisonment and so-called reeducation.